Session 4: Being Allies

**Brainstorming Tools for Practicing Interventions**

**Benefits and Facilitation Options**

**Benefits:** To develop an understanding of the many tools and techniques available to us when intervening in oppression

**Time required:** 15-20 minutes

**Ideal Group Size:** Any

**Support Materials:** Large white board or flip chart paper and markers, handouts on Intervention Tools

**Activity description:** Facilitators and participants generate a list of techniques for becoming allies against oppression

**Recommended Lead-in:** “Next we are going to do an activity where we get to brainstorm ways of being allies against oppression”

**Key Instructions:**

1. Ask participants to describe a time when someone "Stuck up for you" (this could be a round robin or just a few responses depending on size of group) How did that feel?

2. Ask: What is the definition of an ally? (in terms of working against oppression)

3. Ask: What are some things we might do as an ally? (This is a more general question we are looking for answers such as: go to or organize protests, volunteer, give money, vote, look at the policies in our organization, intervene)

4. Brainstorm and write down on flipchart a list of more specific intervention techniques that could be used when something oppressive is occurring (such as: ask clarifying questions, use humor etc.) or if you have limited time have the techniques written on an overhead/flipchart for the group ahead of time and go over them yourself.

5. If you have time also ask the participants to brainstorm a list of responses to when someone has just told them that something they did was oppressive.
Key Points:

1. It is important to think about what our goals is when we are intervening

2. Unlearning oppression is a process - do not necessarily expect that someone will "get it" right away - think of yourself as planting a seed

3. If you don't know what to say at the time you can always go back and address the issue later.

Note: This exercise is good to do before you do the intervention practice exercises.